

DESCRIPTIONS OF TWO NEW AUSTRALIAN
VARIETIES OF COWRIES.

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No group of shells is perhaps more sought after by collectors than the Cowries, and recently there came into my possession two specimens, which, while agreeing in the main with two well-established species, differed sufficiently to be worthy of varietal distinction. I have therefore decided to record them under the names of *Cypræa venusta*, Sowerby, var. *bakeri*, and *C. miliaris*, Gmelin, var. *gabrielii*.

As *Cypræa venusta*, Sowerby, is rare, the following description by Brazier may be quoted * :—

"Shell pyriformly ovate, rather thin, markedly ventricose, base almost flat; sides steep, deeply notched, anterior end contracted and prominent, posterior end produced, narrow, aperture almost straight, except in front, rather open; teeth thick, obtuse, faint purplish-white, about twenty-four on the outer edge, and confined to the margin of the aperture; on the columellar side the teeth are short, oval, blunt, and larger, becoming almost obsolete in front; cream-coloured with a cinnamon tinge, smooth and polished, variegated with rather large brown spots of irregular size and irregularly distributed; the cinnamon tinge is slightly deeper at the ends: base white and perfectly smooth, sides light, extremities rather recurved, interior pinkish-white. It is three inches long, breadth about an inch and a half. Was found at Cervantes Island, west coast of Australia."

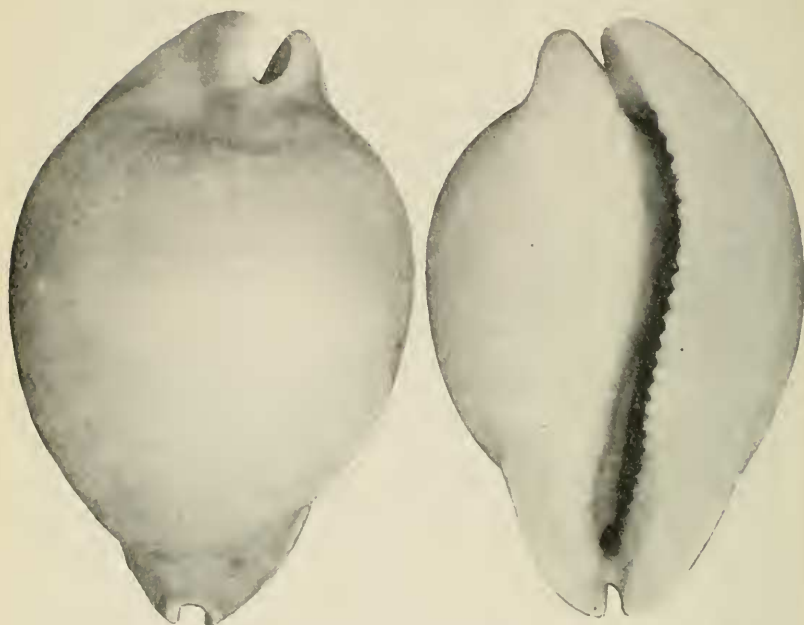
CYPRÆA VENUSTA, Sowerby, var. BAKERI, nov.

This differs from the foregoing in being a solid shell, with obsolete irregularly-sized striæ, or incremental growth lines, discernible underlying the enamel, and extending lengthwise over the dorsum, which, at the anterior end, is sparsely, irregularly contused. The base is white, and two faintly distinguishable white bands cross the dorsum, one being narrow and almost central, the other at the anterior is rather broader; the remainder of the dorsum is tinted with flesh colour. The absence of any of the brown maculations mentioned as occurring in other specimens makes this variety readily distinguishable.

Dimensions of Type of Variety.—Length, 72 mm.; breadth, 50 mm.; height, 45.5 mm.

Locality.—Western Australia.

* "Description and Geographical Range of Cowries in Australasia," by John Brazier, C.M.Z.S., page 25.



Figs. 1, 2—*Cypræa venusta*, Sowerby, var. *bakeri*, nov.

Observations.—Named in honour of Mr. F. H. Baker, who has rendered much assistance by mounting molluscan odontophores for microscopic examination.

Type of variety in my collection.

CYPRÆA MILIARIS, Gmelin. var. GABRIELI, nov.

Brazier, in his publication quoted, at page 22, describes an Australian specimen of *C. miliaris*, Gmelin, and of this well-known species states:—"It is of an oblong-ovate form, attenuated anteriorly, extremities produced, a little reflexed, sides pitted, back citron-yellow, profusely sprinkled with eyes of various sizes, sides and base white."

The variety now named *gabriel* is semi-translucent, base and margins white, dorsum uniformly of a fawn colour, without the slightest trace of any spot or other coloration or marking on any part of the shell. It is more ventricose than the ordinary form, and the grooves of the teeth extend on the outer lip nearly to the outer margin. There are twenty-one teeth on the outer lip and fifteen on the columellar side.

Dimensions of Type of Variety.—Length, 40 mm.; breadth, 26 mm.; height, 20 mm.

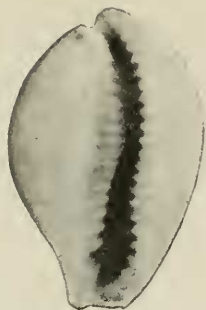


Fig. 3—*Cypraea miliaris*, Gmelin, var. *gabrieli*, nov.

Locality.—Northern Territory, Australia.

Observations.—Named in honour of my ardent and able collaborator, Mr. Charles J. Gabriel.

Type of variety in my collection.

The figures are from photographs kindly taken by Mr. R. R. Duncan.

NOTES FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.

AN exhibit that is attracting a good deal of attention has just been completed and placed on view. It consists of a Samoyede sledge drawn by two reindeer. In the sledge a man is seated, wearing the characteristic outer cloak and close-fitting hood of reindeer fur. In his left hand he holds a single rein, and in his right the long pole, coloured red, white, and blue, like that of a barber, with which the animals are guided. The harnessing of the animals is absolutely correct, thanks to the assistance of Mr. E. Eide, a Norwegian, who has been accustomed to handling reindeer in his native country. A woman, in her picturesque winter costume, stands by the side of the sledge. She wears an outer cloak of light-coloured reindeer fur, the upper part of which is decorated with inset lines of darker fur and patches of coloured cloth—material derived from Russian traders with whom the Samoyedes come in contact. The skirt has three flounces of dogs' skin fur, and her head is covered with a dark brown hood of the same material. Both the man and woman wear under-cloaks of reindeer fur, and in the case of these the fur side is worn innermost for the sake of warmth. Each of them wears also long fur stockings encased in decorated fur boots.

The scene, including its surroundings of snow, has been made as true to nature as possible. The Samoyede people are the